

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINGST 01783 312039 Z

63

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 EB-11

COME-00 TRSE-00 AGR-20 SIL-01 LAB-06 CU-04 AID-20

SPM-01 IO-13 RSR-01 /159 W  
----- 090869

R 311955 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2046

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINGSTON 1783

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JM

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER ON POPULATION MATTERS

REF: KINGSTON 1569

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER CLAIMS THAT PEOPLE CAN'T BE FORCED INTO FAMILY PLANNING AND CITES EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WITH POPULATION GROWTH. MINISTER OF HEALTH COMMENTS ON DECLINE IN BIRTH RATE AND INDICATES NEW GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A SPEECH MAY 29 TO THE JAMAICA FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY SEVERLY CRITICIZED AN EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED IN A MAY 17 REGIONAL EDITION OF THE GLEANER. THE EDITORIAL IN QUESTION CLAIMED THAT FAMILY PLANNERS HAD BEEN DEALT A "SEVERE BLOW" BY THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENTS ON FREE EDUCATION, FREE SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND INCREASED FOOD PRODUCTION. THE FAMILY PLANNERS HAD BEEN USING THE COST OF EDUCATION, FOOD AND CLOTHING AS INCENTIVES TO PRACTICE BIRTH CONTROL AND, WITH THESE PROBLEMS APPARENTLY SOLVED BY GOVERNMENTAL FIAT, THE INCENTIVE DISA-  
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PAGE 02 KINGST 01783 312039 Z

PPEARED.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER ACCUSED THE FAMILY PLANNERS OF USING SCARE TACTICS WHICH FAILED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NATURAL INSTINCTS IN MAN. HE REITERATED THE REMARK IN REFTEL TO THE EFFECT THAT ALL SOCIAL EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT THE MORE PROSPEROUS A SOCIETY BECAME, THE LESS TROUBLE IT HAD WITH ITS BIRTH- RATE.

4. ON THE SAME DAY, THE MINISTER OF HEALTH STATED IN PARLIAMENT THAT THE BIRTH RATE FOR THE YEAR ENDING IN MAR 1972 HAD REACHED ITS LOWEST POINT FOR THE PAST 12 YEARS - 33.8 PER THOUSAND - AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S 35.9, BUT CONSIDERABLY SHORT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S MID- DECADE GOAL OF 25. THE MINISTER SAID THAT EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE TO INTRODUCE FAMILY LIFE TRAINING INTO YOUTH TRAINING PROGRAMS AND TO SECURE SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS IN THE COST OF CONTRACEPTIVES.

5. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY IS SOMEWHAT DISTURBED BY THE ATTITUDE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SOURCE IN REFTEL TOWARD JAMAICA'S POPULATION GROWTH. THEY MAY BE CORRECT IN THEIR VIEW THAT DEVELOPED ECONOMIES DO NOT HAVE POPULATION PROBLEMS, BUT CURRENT JAMAICAN ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE DOES NOT LEAD TO THE OPTIMISTIC CONCLUSION THAT IT IS SAFE TO RELY ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO CURB POPULATION GROWTH. THE PRIME MINISTER IS OBVIOUSLY WALKING A TIGHTROPE ON A SENSITIVE ISSUE AND, PERHAPS, THE MINISTER OF HEALTH'S COMMENTS ARE MORE INDICATIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REAL VS POLITICAL INTENTIONS.  
DE ROULET

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Authority:** hilburpw  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 73 KINGSTON 1569  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** hilburpw  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 15 JAN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by hilburpw>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 980309  
**Subject:** PRIME MINISTER ON POPULATION MATTERS  
**TAGS:** PINT, JM, PINT  
**To:** ARA  
BRIDGETOWN  
GEORGETOWN  
PORT OF SPAIN  
SECSTATE WASHDC  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

